

What's new at Shanna Schmidt Numismatics Inc.

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Newsletter #67:

What's New at Shanna Schmidt Numismatics Inc.

I hope the week was good for everyone. Next week I will be attending the Swiss auctions. Last week I discussed NAC as it is a large auction. This week I will describe Nomos and Leu.

Nomos Auction 16 (May 10)

This attractive sale features 237 coins of Greek, Roman and Byzantine origin. Unfortunately there will likely be some overlap between the end of the NAC 106 part 2 auction and the beginning of the Nomos sale. I'm sure that there will be a race by dealers to get to the Nomos auction on time (NAC's Baur au Lac auction is about a 10-15 minute walk to the Zunfthaus zur Saffran where Nomos is held). I've already made some plans for handling bids at NAC if necessary so I can get to Nomos on time as I think attending the entire Nomos sale is worthwhile.

So now to the sale.....

The Nomos catalog has several coins from the hugely successful Prospero Collection. For those of us that attended that auction there was a lot of frustration at not being able to buy the coins we ultimately wanted. The Sheikh Saud bin Mohammed Al-Thani (who died in 2014 at the age of 48) was on a buying spree across the art world. Ancient coins were among his passions so he bid until he ultimately was the last man standing. The coins now thought to be forever gone in Qatar have resurfaced in the market slowly but surely. London's Morton & Eden had a "Princely Collection" in May 2017 and now we likely see more of the Sheik's coins come to Nomos for this upcoming auction. Whether they were consigned by the family of the Sheik or someone else is irrelevant. Many of these coins boast wonderful old pedigrees and are stunning pieces.

A few highlights of the auction are:

Lot 13:

A beautiful gold stater from Tarentum. This piece came originally from a Glendining & Co. auction from 1963. The obverse Zeus portrait is of a superb classical style. This coin is by no means large, but is a decently sized gold coin by Greek standards.

Lot 35:

The ever sought after tetradrachm by the "Demareteion Master". This piece is one that rarely comes to market. This particular piece comes from the Nelson B. Hunt Collection and previous to that a Bank Leu auction (28 April 1982, lot 33). Some may remember that Nelson and his brother Herbert infamously attempted and failed to corner the silver bullion market on March 27, 1980. Nelson had an extensive coin collection that he was forced to sell through Sotheby's in 1990 as a result of the legal tangle that occurred following this catastrophic event.

Lot 42:

An amazing Messana tetradrachm with a beautiful strike and complete. This coin was most recently in a 2015 NGSA auction (Geneva) and was jointly owned by Baron Thyssen-Bornemisza and Thomas S. Kaplan however more impressive is that it comes from the Vicomte de Sartiges and Virzi collections.

Lot 55:

A rare gold drachm from Thasos. Another Prospero auction coin, this piece is in remarkable condition with only a small die break on the reverse at 12h. It is a coin that seldom comes in auction and not typically in this grade. There was another coin of the type that came to auction last May in Morton & Eden (Auction 26, 24 May 2017, lot 10) with same dies and hammered for 62,000 GBP (about 80,000 USD at the time).

Lot 76:

(the cover coin). An exceedingly rare tetradrachm from Macedonia under Roman rule. This piece originally comes from a Bank Leu sale from 1979 (auction 22, lot 84) and was most recently was auctioned in 2015 through NGSA. Stylistically beautiful, this coin bears no real resemblance to the Roman styles that followed in provincial cities under the Romans. It is an extraordinary piece of art that just preceded the closing down of the Macedonian silver mines.

Leu Numismatik Auction 2 (May 11)

Leu Numismatik is holding their 2nd auction with 380 lots. Last year I was very impressed with the care that Yves and Lars took with creating their first catalog. Hard bound and with beautiful photography their second catalog does not disappoint. I'm always happy to send clients a catalog if time permits before the auction, but Leu's catalogs are free and if you want to get one sent directly than you can visit their website to register.

A few highlights:

Lots 1-53:

A delightful group of Celtic and Central European Tribe coinage. There are several small pieces of fractional gold that are rarely seen in auction.

Lot 56:

A very rare tetradrachm from Akragas that perfectly showcases the classical style. Coins from Akragas that are more common are the eagle/crab types. This coin shows a much more obscure combination of a quadriga on the obverse and two eagles carrying a hare in their talons on the reverse.

Lot 57:

Another seldom seen type with an amazing reverse of Herakles. This piece, like the lot before show some of the most intricate and beautiful work being produced at the time.

Lot 227:

An impressive tetradrachm of Mark Antony and Cleopatra. Although the coin has granular surfaces, the type is exceedingly rare and difficult to obtain even in this condition. This is a very nice example.

Lot 310:

An interesting and unpublished silver 'denarius' of Victorinus. This fascinating piece has an aureus of the same obverse die but is not found in silver.

There is also quite a lovely section of rare Armenian coins. These coins likely appeal to a specialized collector but are a treat for those that rarely come across the types. In addition, I noticed a sizable offering of large Roman provincial coinage that are reasonably estimated.

Last thoughts on Switzerland

It will certainly be a busy week there but I am looking forward to viewing the contents of these catalogs. As always if you need representation do not hesitate to reach out to me. I'm available all week and will be checking my email frequently.

Duplicate books for sale on shannaschmidt.com

I've started offering duplicate copies of books that I own. I'm not trying to become a book dealer by any means but I would like to sell the books for what I put into them. Anyone that is building a numismatic library knows that it is inevitable that you will buy something you already have or get a full set of something which makes the single book you have not worth keeping. Check it out here:

<https://www.shannaschmidt.com/books/>



Coin of the Week

<https://www.shannaschmidt.com/greek-coins/gk1209>

The coin this week undoubtedly comes from a hoard found in the late 1800's. After reviewing several catalogs from Europe from the late 1890's and well into the 1900's, I found several examples that shared the same dies with this piece. I am still searching for the older pedigree but it continues to evade me.

BRUTTIUM. Kroton. c. 400–325 BC

AR Stater, 7.73g (23mm, 3h). Head of Hera Lacinia facing slightly right, wearing necklace and polos decorated with palmettes; B to right / Young Herakles, nude, holding cup in extended right hand and club in left, reclining left on lion skin draped over rock; ΚΡΟΤΩΝΙΑΤΑΣ around, bow below.

Pedigree: Ex Giessener Münzhandlung 69, 18 November 1994, lot 85 (and coverpiece)

Price: \$27,500

The Greek city state of Kroton was located on the far southern end of Italy, essentially at the bottom of the “boot”. The city was founded in c. 710 BC by Myscellus from the Peloponnesus. The people of Kroton were known for their physical strength and their uncomplicated and straightforward existence. The reverse of this coin shows a strong, young Herakles reclining with a club in his hand and a bow below. This certainly mirrors the desired physique of the men that lived there. Kroton was home to many famous olympic athletes and physicians. One of the more famous of the olympians was the 6th century Greek wrestler Milo of Kroton. Many athletes from that time were also involved in military affairs. The distinct lines society places on a person's role, whether it be soldier, philosopher or athlete were blurred. Pythagoras was also a temporary citizen of Kroton in c. 530 BC.

This coin shows a beautiful, peaceful rendition of the goddess Hera on the obverse. Just some 40–80 years earlier a grand temple was built to honor the sister/wife of Zeus. It was said to have been one of the most beautiful structures in southern Italy. During the invasion by Carthage in 206 BC, Hannibal apparently saw a pillar of gold in the temple and wondered if it was pure. Upon determining it was, he ordered the pillar to be moved from the temple and

returned with him to Carthage. That evening Hera visited him in his dream and threatened to take one of his eyes if he proceeded with his plan. He decided to erect a golden heifer that sat above the pillar as his apology to the goddess.

The structure stood throughout the centuries with little to no damage but was finally destroyed in 1600 for the construction of an episcopal palace.

References: Attianese 138; HN Italy 2169; SNG ANS 375 (same dies); SNG Lloyd –; Gulbenkian 131 (same dies); Kraay & Hirmer 270 = de Luynes 728 (same dies)

Grade: aEF. Rare in this grade

gk1209

<https://www.shannaschmidt.com/greek-coins/gk1209>

If you are interested in this coin please click the link above or email me at shanna@shannaschmidt.com

Until next week!
Shanna

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